

EVALUATING EFFECTIVENESS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN NEGOTIATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Emotions and its role in negotiation have received considerable interest in literature in the recent years. Knowing that there are a number of complexities involved in managing emotions during negotiations, Emotional Intelligence (EI) comes into the picture. The concept is receiving growing interest in organizations, leadership and work outcomes. An emotionally intelligent person is said to manage emotions effectively by being aware of his own emotions and regulating emotions when required. This could also be implied as using emotions strategically. Although, the concept has been said to help negotiate in an integrative manner, it also has limitations with some researchers, not holding the concept to be well-defined. Hence, the following essay aims to evaluate effectiveness of EI in negotiations. We try to understand how developing EI can assist in managing emotions and to what extent it can be used strategically for better outcomes in negotiation.

KEYWORDS: Emotional Intelligence, Leadership & Negotiations

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INTRODUCTION

Research on emotions has gone from completely discounting any use of emotions to extolling the strategic influence of emotions in expanding the pie, persuading and perhaps even manipulating the opponent to a certain degree. Discounting of emotional usage sprung from early decision-making models that claimed that, experiencing emotions led to inferior information appraisals and attributions (Janis & Mann, 1977). In a negotiation situation, this meant making decisions detrimental to one's interests. However, recent scientific findings from the fields of Cognitive and Social Psychology and Neuroscience have debunked the above models.

As an example, consider the findings of neuroscientist Antonio Damasio, who was able to showcase that patients with lesions to the right hemisphere of their brain, that is, the side that regulates emotions, were unable make effective decisions (Leary, Pillemer & Wheeler, 2013). The searcher extended the explanation that being unable to dip into the emotional side of their brain; they were not able to prioritize their issues - they could not tell what really mattered to them. Negotiation research is yet to catch up with these experimental findings in other disciplines, but some negotiation-specific findings are trickling in. For example, the poker- faced approach to negotiation was shown to breed mistrust among negotiating parties, a huge obstacle for reaching an optimal negotiation outcome (Drolet & Moris, 2000).

Now that the research community is quite convinced on the strategic importance of emotions in negotiation, it brings forth a problem of a different nature-how to effectively deploy emotions in actual negotiation

settings. Strategic emotional exhibition research just assumes that negotiators would know how to effectively control and communicate their emotions to the opposition for desired results, but it is not always the case (Kopelman, Rosette & Thompson, 2006). The ability to regulate and communicate emotions has been termed as Emotional Intelligence (EI). High EI is necessary to make good use of emotions in negotiation (Shea & Gino, 2012).

Therefore, this essay will begin by uncovering the strategic influences of different types of emotions in a negotiation situation. The underlying complexities and counter-intuitive research findings highlighted in this section makes a strong case for the importance of EI among negotiators. Hence, our next section will introduce the concept and models of EI, and the final section will explore the various contributions that EI can make to negotiation and ways to enhance and develop EI among novice and expert negotiators alike.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Role of Emotions in Negotiations

Emotions can be thought of as the affective outcomes of the appraisals we conduct of specific environmental stimuli around us (Lazarus, 1991). They are considered to be of a more acute and short-termed nature than their more diffused and long-lived affective cousins-moods (Ekman & Davidson, 1994). Pre-millennium negotiation research is now seen to have been skewed towards models of rationality, altogether discounting the role of or need for emotions in a negotiation situation. It was only after Kahneman and Tversky's seminal papers on bounded rationality came out, the researchers began to acknowledge that humans are not as logical as they are given credit for (Kahneman, 2003).

This led to a marked shift in the research focus-from how not to let emotions interfere in a negotiation towards how to strategically integrate emotions for a more successful negotiation outcome (Olekalns & Adair, 2013). The simplistic view of drawing unreal boundaries between rationality and emotions has now given way to understanding the importance of both the rational and affective aspects of a negotiator. Neither the rational nor the affective component needs to be suppressed for the others sake. Both can flourish and complement each other in a negotiation setting.

Contemporary research investigating the role of emotions in negotiation has usually taken one of the following two routes - exploring the intrapersonal or interpersonal emotional effects (Morris & Keltner, 2000; Van Kleef et al., 2004). The scope of the intrapersonal emotional effects is limited to the individual himself. It illustrates the effect an individual's emotions have on his cognition, behavior, strategies and tactics used in a negotiation (Olekalns & Adair, 2013). Intrapersonal affect researches find that subjects in a good mood later go on to display more cooperative rather than competitive strategies (Anderson & Thompson, 2004).

On the other hand, anger causes individuals to exhibit heightened rejection of offers, especially when the individual is not able to properly attribute the presence of the emotion to a related cause (Srivastva et al., 2009). We can endeavor to explain this finding by utilizing the *Affect-as-information model* (Schwartz & Clore, 1983). This model states that individuals use their emotions to make judgments as to how they should respond to external stimuli, for example, an offer made by the opposing party. Coming back to the research study, an individual might be angry due to a completely unrelated reason, however, if he is unable to pin – point the reason, there is an increased likelihood that the person would end up misattributing his felt anger to the stimulus in direct view, in this case, the offer at the negotiation table.

However, studies conducted on sadness did not yield similar results. So, even though both anger and sadness share the same valence, their effect plays out quite differently in the real world. Another nuance emotion, guilt was found to induce more cooperative behaviors (Ketelaar & Au, 2003). An explanation for this is extended by the *Commitment model* (Frank, 1988). It theorizes that, guilt works at the intrapersonal level, causing the person to let go of immediate self-gratifications and focus more on building a long-lasting relationship with the other party.

Other discrete emotions like anxiety and stress were found to leave the subject worse off than before by making him ask for less and quitting the negotiation prematurely (Brooks & Schweitzer, 2011). But, the relationship of anxiety and negotiation outcomes is not as linear as it first appears. Subsequent research found that, an individual's levels of self-efficacy can buffer some of the harmful effects of anxiety. Moreover, framing the upcoming negotiation as a challenge rather than as a threat can turn things around for the anxious negotiator (O'Connor et al., 2010). The above studies highlight how discrete emotions can have disparate effects even though they might be derived from the same valence pool. This myopia persists, even when investigators explore affective interpersonal effects.

Interpersonal effects are highly salient, since negotiation is a social process and includes economic as well as relational outcomes. *The Emotions as Social Information (EASI) theory* proposes that, emotions influence people through affective and informational processes (Van Kleef, 2009). Although the theory succinctly expresses the interpersonal effects of emotions, it fails to take into account several contingencies that affect whether and how much emotional information people imbibe.

Research has shown that high power individuals are less likely to be affected by the other party's emotions (Van Kleef et al., 2006), probably because they can afford to forego such information. This also highlights the role of motivational processes or more specifically epistemic motivation, that is, the need to have a high understanding of the external environment, in this case, the negotiation scenario (DeDreu & Carnevale, 2003). Hence, a person's motivation levels would dictate the degree of information processing he undertakes, which in turn will determine how much influence the opposing party's emotions wield on him.

The most frequently studied emotions are anger and happiness. Negotiators battling angry opponents are shown to make larger concessions, with high – power parties getting an even larger share of the pie (VanKleef et al., 2004). However, this relationship is also moderated by several factors. Larger concessions are made only by parties, who had a low desire for “cognitive closure” and when time to seal the deal is low (Van Kleef et al., 2004). This again highlights the importance of personal motivational levels. A cursory glance at this research might seem like, it suggests the use of anger for attaining beneficial outcomes, but the relational damage anger can do if it is used as a tactic should also be kept in mind. Individuals wielding less power should steer clear of this tactic, since they will most probably create a distasteful impression of themselves and will also not receive concessions from their more-powerful opponents (Van Kleef et al., 2004).

Perceived authenticity of anger and happiness shown also affects the degree of concessions made (Tng & Au, 2014). In authentic emotions when caught by the opposition can lead to them harboring feelings of anger and the urge to retaliate. This can very well lead to a conflict spiral with losses for both or all parties. Suspensions can be stoked, even when the emotions displayed are a little vague and not outright in authentic. Vague emotional displays come to the fore, when negotiations take place via computers or other technological devices. So, using emotions as a tactic would be more suitable in a face-to-face negotiation situation, where the element of emotional vagueness can be addressed promptly

(Tng & Au, 2014). Hence, these research studies extol the complex nature of using emotions, tactically.

Another moderator that further complicates the use of emotions in negotiations is culture, or more specifically a cultural-fit, since violating cultural norms can be costly in terms of the negotiation task and the overarching relationship among parties. Researchers studying East Asian negotiators report how displaying negative emotions can be detrimental, since it goes contrary to the Asian culture that highly values harmony and saving face (Kopelman & Rosette, 2008). This is in addition to other advantages positive emotions bring to the negotiation table, like focusing on joint gains, inducing trust and boosting creativity (Kopelman et al., 2005).

However, positive emotions do not always guarantee success in negotiations. For example, it can lower an individual's impression, if he makes a transition from being angry to happy rather than staying happy throughout the negotiation (Filipowicz, Barsade & Melwani, 2011). This change of emotions makes the other party feel, as if they might have extended more concessions than necessary, since the opposition brightened up. Moreover, the *Emotional Contagion theory* (Barsade, 2002) posits that the other party is still angry after catching the initial emotion from the angry opposition, and this buffers the positive effect of the later happiness exhibited by the opposition. Hence, another layer of complexity is added to the influence of emotions on negotiations.

Emotions can prove to be a powerful persuasive tool in negotiations. However, its success is heavily dependent on several contingencies and the sharpness of the individual, who can sense these constraints. Each emotion, whether pure or transitional, interacts with several situational and individual factors, all at once during negotiations. Considering these complexities, it becomes apparent that a substantive degree of emotional intelligence is paramount for using emotions as a negotiation strategy. Having understood how emotions affect negotiations, we will now look at how Emotional Intelligence can change negotiation outcomes.

Emotional Intelligence

The term Emotional Intelligence was initially proposed by and later elaborated on by Mayer and Salovey (1999). Mayer and Salovey (1997) have defined it as “the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth”

According to Goleman (1995), EI incorporates five competencies: *self-control, self-awareness, motivation, social skills and empathy*. In a rapidly changing business environment, sustainability in business is attained when both emotions and logic go into making a decision and give birth to rationalization. Bad decisions happen due to the asymmetry between our logical thinking and emotions. This process of understanding and facilitating feelings into rational thought is considered as ‘emotional intelligence’ (Giorgi, 2013).

The conceptualization of EI lies in its four models. According to Mayer et al. (1997), the four models of EI are:

- **Identify:** The ability to perceive emotions through facial expressions pertaining to fear, anger, anxiety, and joy. Also evaluating the nonverbal aspects as well.
- **Understand:** The ability to understand emotions. Each emotion has its cognitive and behavioral components associated with the verbal and non-verbal messages.

- **Use:** The ability to utilize emotions to facilitate thought processes. Emotions prioritize our thinking. It prepares us to focus on issues that are important to us.
- **Manage:** The ability to portray certain types of emotions through behaviors, and to use them to one's advantage. For example, if an individual is sad, it is more probable that the individual would be contemplative and analytical. However, if an individual is happy, they are more likely to be social and extroverted.

Goleman's model of EI (1995), provides a different perspective to the concept of EI. It is more holistic. This model links social and emotional competency together and comes up with four clusters.

- **Self-Awareness:** It is the ability to realize one's own emotions and to recognize its effect on relationships and performance.
- **Social-Awareness:** It is the capacity to identify the other party's emotions, understand their point of view, and act accordingly.
- **Self-Management:** It is the capacity to manage one's own emotions and be mindful about its utilization for one's own benefits as well as its adaptability to varied situations.
- **Social Skills/Relationship Management:** It is the capacity to use one's emotions to build successful relationships and leave a positive impression on others. This is also an important tenet of strong leadership.

These EI elements help to inform our decisions, predict business outcomes, help us to understand people so as to build healthy relationships. Such an ability to comprehend, express, and adjust one's own emotions helps to develop and maintain healthy business relationships (Li et al., 2016). Based on the Mayer - Salovey model, MSCEIT – “The Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test” is used to measure the EI of an individual. MSCEIT test is mainly based on behavioral questions, which test all the four dimensions. It uses pictures of landscapes and facial expressions to get as core on the ‘perceiving emotion scale’. It also studies scenarios of places where individuals demonstrated distinct emotions and how it varies with time that, understands the emotional level. Likewise, for other dimensions’ separate situations are presented (Giorgi, 2013; Mueller & Curhan, 2006).

The Goleman model of EI uses 360 instruments to measure EI – in this case, both social and emotional competencies (Antonakis, Ashkanasy & Dasborough, 2009). However, Racheal Green – a famous Australian EI specialist, has come up with a novel method to measure EI. It is mix of both Mayer's model and Goleman's model. The test is known as ‘Genos Emotional Intelligence Inventory’ (Li et al., 2016). Hence, these concepts and tests facilitate the organization to identify the appropriate person and utilize his/her abilities for superior business outcomes. In an increasingly globalizing world, where most businesses have crossed all geographical boundaries, a person with high EI would be an asset to build and sustain new relationships.

Emotional Intelligence in Negotiation

Research in emotional intelligence and its impact on negotiation is relatively sparse, compared to other aspects of individual differences in negotiation. The concept is new, and there is not much literature available to support that Emotional intelligence can considerably affect negotiation process. However, it is a thought-provoking topic, because research proves that emotions influence negotiation and bargaining (Druckman & Olekalns, 2008). As discussed before, Emotional intelligence assists in attaining range of capabilities like comprehending, perceiving, controlling and using

thoughts with emotions (Neubauer & Freudenthaler, 2005). Research has shown that individuals with high Emotional intelligence enjoy positive relations with everyone (Lopes, Salovey, & Straus, 2003) and are chosen as leaders more often (Kerr, Garvin, Heaton & Boyle, 2006). It is also said to have an impact on workplace outcomes (Law, Wong, & Song, 2004).

Research has proven that EI helps individuals to handle tangible challenges and pressures (Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2012) as well as manage unsettling instincts and moods (Goleman, 2011). It also assists in teamwork that enables individuals in building networks, maintaining relationships and increasing rapport (Cooper & Petrides, 2010; Mayer et al., 1999). EI efficiently manages teamwork as it assists in knowing the strengths and weaknesses of others and the strengths. Furthermore, it has also been proven that EI helps in stress management (Gohm, Corser, & Dalsky, 2005), organizational commitment (Brunetto, Teo, Shacklock, & Farrington Wharton, 2012), customer relations (Kernbach & Schutte, 2005) and leader's performance (Oginska-Bulik, 2005). Emotions, both positive and negative have been found to affect negotiation outcomes (Olekalns & Druckman, 2014). Fulmer and Barry (2004) have found strong links between Emotional Intelligence and information attainment, decision making and strategic alternatives in negotiation. This makes EI an important competency for negotiators. An individual's emotions can significantly impact the emotions of the interaction partners.

If emotions are not managed, negotiation processes disintegrate resulting in dissatisfaction with the outcome or no deal (Druckman & Olekalns, 2008; Kumar, 1997). Therefore, EI of both negotiators influences subjective and objective negotiation outcomes (Der Foo, Anger Elfenbein, Hoon Tan, & Chuan Aik, 2004). EI permits individuals to sense emotional change and uncover reasons for the change (Goleman, 1995). Moreover, EI aids in assessing the outcome of negative emotions if expressed (Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, & Sitarenios, 2001) thus, improving a negotiator's competence to circumvent negative outcomes. Therefore, EI encourages negotiators to employ constructive attitude during negotiation.

Considering the different aspects of EI, *Emotion self-awareness* is vital because negotiators' own emotions, the emotions attached to the objectives of the negotiation process and emotions that the process itself creates significant impacts on the manner in which negotiation proceeds (Schreier, 2002). Since, negotiations are generally done in professional settings, it becomes vital that negotiators keep their emotions aside, and maintain a professional demeanor.

Emotional self-regulation involves managing emotions during negotiations to exhibit greater control in expressing emotions (Schreier, 2002). Individuals manifesting high EI are able to circumvent conflicts in a negotiation by regulating their emotions, so that they show appropriate emotions, at appropriate times and in appropriate ways (Olekalns & Adair, 2013). *Emotion recognition* aids individuals in gathering information about an opponent's internal states since negotiations are "*mixed motive*" meaning, it has components of both competition and cooperation among negotiating opponents (Elfenbein, Foo, & White, 2007). Since, information has to be shared sparingly, it is vital to understand the opponent's interests and inclinations. This is aided by emotional intelligence.

For example, The Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS), (Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply, Australia, 2016). Australia advocates EI as an important attribute of Procurement Negotiators in its company (CIPS Australia, 2016b). The Institute believes that EI would result in better outcomes in negotiations, and therefore they have identified levels (high, medium and low) of EI required during the three stages of negotiation - preparation, negotiation and deal closure (CIPS Australia, 2016a). This example illustrates how the importance of EI is now being recognized in the business arena and has become a legitimate criterion for evaluating job success.

Integrative negotiation is a process, where in both parties try to unearth mutual interests and take a more prosocial approach to ensure a mutually- beneficial deal (Han, Kwon, Bae, & Park, 2012). Individuals with high EI have the capability to understand the emotions of others thus, being aware of whether the other party is satisfied with the outcome, and whether their own interests have also been met. Such individuals comprehend subtle cues during the negotiation, assuring a joint unprejudiced outcome (Naquin & Paulson, 2003). Emotionally, intelligent individuals are successful in gaining trust of other (Chen, Lam, & Zhong, 2012) and interpersonal trust is critical in establishing long-term relationships between negotiation parties (Kong, Dirks, & Ferrin, 2014).

Moreover, regulating emotions helps negotiators to remain focused on the objective in hand even when emotions run high and threaten to create an impasse (Conlon & SheltonHunt, 2002). Furthermore, such a person is more likely to develop long-lasting relations with opponents (Hegtvedt & Killian, 1999) as they exhibit more constructive social influences (Lopes et al., 2003). Therefore, individuals, who are high on EI experience more successful outcomes as they expand the pie for all parties to share.

LIMITATIONS

A person with high EI creates a positive environment in negotiation and is shown to receive greater concessions from the other party (Baron, 1990). Further, by comprehending minute gestures, people high on EI can ascertain the most ideal offer that involves the least compromise. Not only does the emotionally intelligent person experience more satisfaction, but also the satisfaction of the counterpart increases and they are more likely to work with them again in future (Mueller & Curhan, 2006). More recently, Kim, Cundiff and Choi (2015) in their research have concluded that, individuals negotiating with emotionally intelligent negotiators experience positive emotions, had more positive impressions of the other party and were more open to discussing contentious issues. They also found that negotiators showed more trust in their emotionally intelligent counterparts, as they perceived their counterparts to be more honest and reliable (Kim et al., 2015).

The good thing about EI is that, it can be developed later in life unlike other forms of intelligence (Payne, 1985). The first step involves individuals' acknowledging their emotions. Payne further states that emotions should not be suppressed as they may resurface at some critical point only to exacerbate fear and pain (Payne, 1985). Furthermore, if individuals face difficulty expressing emotions, *self-integration* should be adopted. It has been defined by Payne (1985) as "process of growth and change precipitated by bringing inner experience and outer expression together into a congruent whole" (pg.310)

Research proves that EI can be increased (Nelis, Quoidbach, Mikolajczak, & Hansenne, 2009) using the *Four-Branch Model* of EI created by Mayer and Salovey (2001) discussed before. In a research conducted by Reilly (2005), negotiations training was used to increase EI in law students. According to him, simulations are an effective way to develop EI; because it helps people analyze and experience the theories in real time, which enhances their understanding (Reilly, 2005).

In spite of the above proven gains of EI, researchers are still skeptic about the concept of EI. According to Kilduff, Chiaburuand Menges (2010), individuals who are high on EI use it to pursue their own interests are often at the expense of others. This implies that, such individuals might be tempted to use emotions manipulatively by evaluating their opponent's emotions and regulate their own (Kilduff et al., 2010). Yet another research pointed out that,

people high on Machiavellianism straight out prefer manipulation of emotions to achieve their ends (Austin, Farrelly, Black, & Moore, 2007).

Although, emotionally intelligent individuals create value, research shows, they have difficulties in claiming value (DerFooetal., 2004; Kimetal., 2015). One reason could be that, individuals high on EI are more sympathetic towards the other party, or they are more susceptible to deceptive tactics, because they tend to be more trusting and communicate their interests and intentions more frequently (DerFooetal., 2004). Also, advantages of EI may take a long time to transform into long-term gains (Kimetal., 2015). Moreover, research shows, EI may not be helpful in the international context (Imai & Gelfand, 2010). This is because; EI may not necessarily acquaint individuals about the culture related emotions. Cultural - Intelligence along with emotional intelligence is required in such situations (Imai & Gelfand, 2010).

Thus, EI has the potential to bridge the steep rational and emotional divide. Developing EI can help individuals use their own and their opponents' emotions in a rational manner. This entails taking some emotionality out of emotions and injecting rationality in its place.

CONCLUSIONS

During a negotiation situation, individual can experience a plethora of emotions. These emotions may be differentiated based on their valence, intensity and sometimes even authenticity. However, every emotion brings its distinct color and complexities to the negotiation table and can change the economic and relational outcomes, accordingly. Therefore, there is a need to manage and express emotions strategically to enhance these outcomes for oneself. EI exhibits the potential to enhance an individual's ability to manage and communicate emotions effectively, thereby increasing the chances to come to a successful deal.

However, there are other variables like individual's culture, power position or gender that can influence emotions during negotiation. The role may also change when other aspects come into the picture. These aspects have not been included in the essay. This essay analyzed the underlying complexities of different emotional displays and then it evaluated the concept of EI. More specifically, the essay analyzed the role of EI in using emotions, tactically.

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